



United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
Washington, D.C. 20240

March 2, 2010

Memorandum

To: Bureau/Office Heads
Solicitor
Inspector General

Attention: Emergency Coordinators and
Human Resources Directors

From: Laurence I. Broun /s/
Director, Office of Emergency Management

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Director, Office of Human Resources

Subject: Emergency Management Policy Guidance Bulletin 2010-1
Personnel Bulletin 10-02
Department of the Interior Employee Accountability Policy

PURPOSE: To provide policy guidance regarding the reporting of employee accountability data during emergency incidents that may affect Department of the Interior (DOI) employees.

BACKGROUND: Employees are the most vital resource of this department and it is essential for managers to ascertain and report on the status of their workforce when the workplace or surrounding areas are impacted by disasters or other serious events. In an emergency situation or an unplanned event, employees may be unable to communicate their whereabouts, well-being, and ability to work to their supervisors. Uncertainty regarding employee status may also result because employees, supervisors, or managers are unaware of reporting requirements, or because reporting systems fail during catastrophic events; in the latter case, this is often due to the fact the first-line supervisors are themselves impacted by the event and are unable to compile accountability data. Uncertainty regarding employee status during the recent Metro accident in Washington, DC, has compelled the Offices of Emergency Management and Human Resources to clarify and enhance procedures for employee accountability.

POLICY GUIDANCE:

1. General. All organizational units must establish procedures for employee accountability and provide guidance to employees regarding their responsibility for reporting their status to

supervisors or alternate reporting points on a timely basis during emergencies. These procedures must be communicated to employees and should be tested regularly. First-line supervisors are integral to the employee accountability systems and responsible for reporting information via the proper management chain.

2. Responsibilities:

- Bureau Directors, the Solicitor, the Inspector General. Bureau Directors, the Solicitor, and the Inspector General are responsible for designating a lead official for employee accountability, developing accountability procedures for their employees, establishing alternate reporting points, training employees, testing accountability systems, and reporting aggregated data to the Interior Operations Center (IOC) following emergency events.
- Heads of Offices (Office of the Secretary). Individual heads of offices and other staff organizations within the Office of the Secretary are responsible for implementing employee accountability procedures and providing reporting data to the IOC in accordance with the *Office of the Secretary's Employee Accountability Plan*.
- Office of Emergency Management and Office of Human Resources. The Office of Emergency Management in coordination with the Office of Human Resources is responsible for developing accountability procedures and establishing alternate reporting points, providing training materials, and testing accountability systems for employees within the Office of the Secretary.

The Office of Emergency Management will provide at both the IOC and alternate headquarters the communications capabilities and systems required to support data collection and reporting of employee accountability information.

The Office of Emergency Management in coordination with the Office of Human Resources will recruit personnel to serve on an Employee Accountability Unit of the DOI Incident Support Team. The Director, Office of Human Resources, will appoint the Unit Leader and Assistant Unit Leader for the Employee Accountability Unit.

3. Activation. Employee accountability reporting may be self-activated by local units as the result of local emergency conditions, or may be directed by individual bureaus and offices. The Office of Emergency Management may direct employee accountability reporting as part of ongoing reporting requirements during serious emergency incidents (900-DM-4), or the Assistant Secretary, Policy, Management, and Budget may direct department-wide reporting of employee accountability data.

4. Reporting Procedures. Once collected by individual bureaus and offices, information on employee status should be reported to the IOC at 202-208-4108 or DOI_Watch_Office@ios.doi.gov. Under most conditions, data will be reported by the lead official for employee accountability (or assigned alternate personnel) from each bureau, Office of the Solicitor, Office of Inspector General or from points of contact assigned within the *Office of the Secretary's Employee Accountability Plan*. When communications are constrained, subordinate organizational units may directly contact the IOC if necessary to complete their reporting requirement.

5. Additional Guidance.

- At the Departmental level, responsibility for gathering and reporting the employee accountability data is shared by the Offices of Emergency Management and Human Resources. Within each bureau, the Office of the Solicitor, or the Office of Inspector General, the bureau/office head identifies a lead for employee accountability. Once designated, contact information for the lead official (and alternates) should be provided to the IOC.
- In accordance with the above guidance, Bureau Directors, the Solicitor, and the Inspector General must establish the capability for employees to report information through an alternate reporting point during instances where the employees' supervisor cannot be reached. DOI offices or contractor's facilities selected for handling alternate reporting should be located in areas which are not highly vulnerable to catastrophic disasters or other events which might disrupt their ability to operate.
- Phone numbers for alternate reporting points should be disseminated to employees and also provided to the Office of Emergency Management for publication on the DOI web site http://www.doi.gov/emergency/employee_reporting.html. This web site also allows employees who cannot reach their supervisor or the alternate reporting point to complete an on-line form to report during emergencies. Completed forms will be automatically forwarded to the lead official responsible for employee accountability.
- Alternate reporting points for other elements of the Office of the Secretary will be identified by the Office of Emergency Management and published in the *Office of the Secretary's Employee Accountability Plan*.
- Employees who are assigned responsibility for employee accountability reporting should be designated as mission-critical emergency essential employees. Government Emergency Telecommunications Service (GETS) and Wireless Priority Service (WPS) may be provided to these employees to support the employee accountability mission.